2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

The *pukamuni* poles, *a, a*, etc., and *b, b*, etc., are now parallel reefs of stone[30] on the sea-coast at Impanali; circle *d*, is a ring of white sand encircling the death place of *Purukupali*; and *e*, a large boulder at Tapararimi, once a stone axe, which the "workers" had used to cut the *pukamuni* poles.

The remainder of the designs on the painting symbolize the people of creation times mourning for *Purukupali*. The dots *j, j*, on the ground of the painting, represent the coloured ochres on the body of the ceremonial leader, *Talinini*; the black rectangle, *g*, *Waia*, the mother-in-law of *Purukupali*; and *h, h*, two bird-women, *Pungatili* and *Makungdili*.

At *k* (left) is a honey-woman, *Imbara*, the sister of *Talinini*; *l* (upper left), her mother, *Latungkala*, who made a bark basket, and *m*, another honey-woman, *Irama*. *Mawini* is at *n*, he, with *Talinini* and *Taparalili*, performed the first *ilanie* at Bizwururu, on central Bathurst Island. *Taparalili* is at *q*, and other honey-men, *Tupiringini* and *Maipuringe* are at *p* and *s*.

On Pl. 3C, the artist tried to show some of the decorations used in a *pukamuni* ceremony. The series of cross-hatched, more or less rectangular panels, at the top, represent the painted bark baskets which are left on the grave; the vertical panels at the bottom, lines of colour in the hair of the performers, and the groups of chevron designs, the scars on the bodies of the men and women. The horizontal band across the centre of the painting represents the hair belts of the men.

Pl. 3D and 3E are designs which, the artists told me, would be similar to those painted on the burial poles of *Purukupali*.

The artist of Pl. 3D did not give me the meaning of his design, but on Pl. 3E, the four barred panels, *a, a*, etc., represent native roads; the plain bands, *b, b*, etc., on either side, horizontal lines of clouds, the diagonal bands, in the upper and lower panels, native fig trees, and the cross-hatched diamond-shaped panels, spider webs on the trees.

Before the rituals at Taparurimi began, the fish-men engaged in a contest to prove who could throw their spears the furthest. *Pipinjawari* was the most skilled of them all, for, even though he stood behind the others, his spears still travelled the greatest distance. Wherever the spears landed, there are now large eucalyptus trees, the largest of them, called *Warukumbi*, being once the spear of *Pipinjawari*. But in winning the contest, the fish-man strained his spine so badly that parts of the vertebrae were forced through the skin.

At the conclusion of the rituals, it was the duty of *Pipinjawari* to pay the "workers" for the labour of cutting and painting the poles, and for making

[30] Other informants state they are large trees. Probably both informants are correct.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

border, the muddy floor. The other black rectangles, *p*, *p*, etc., indicate rocks in the sea, and their lighter-coloured borders, the waves breaking over them. 532x 778

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Matingalia, at Putawini

A eucalyptus-tree woman *Matingalia* created a rocky island of the same name at the mouth of Putawini Creek, western Bathurst Island. I was not able to gather further details of the mythical story. 773

The central vertical panel *a*, of Pl. 16A, is the open sea, and the outer surrounding white rectangle, *b*, *b*, the dry land of the island. Small hills are at *b*, *b* (top), a large hill is at *o* (top); and deposits of red ochre, *m*, *m*, etc., also form part of the island. 532x 778

A small branch of the Putawini Creek is indicated by the white band at *b*; another branch, Piriki, at *c*; another near Pintamu, at *d*; and still another (unnamed) at *f*, *f*. Timinindu and Dunkunaru Creeks (unidentified) are at *g*, *g*, and *e*, respectively. The eggs of a crocodile, *lukupianga*, similar to those of *Jirakupai*, the dangerous, sea-going *Crocodilus porosus*, are indicated by the white discs, *n*, *n*, etc. [825]

The Bush-fire woman, Puruliangkala, at Turiturina Island

The totemic place of the woman of the bush-fires, *Puruliangkala*, is on Turiturina Island, in Port Hurd, western Bathurst Island, where the mythical bird-man and later the *Ningauis* performed the first *kulama* ceremonies (p. 123). 778 [773]

The central white circle on Pl. 16D, is Turiturina Island: the smaller circles, *a*, *a*, are low rocks in the sea, once the camp-fires of *Puruliangkala*; and *b*, *b*, freshwater springs that provided her with water. The black circles, *c*, *c*, etc., are deposits of red ochre, and *d*, *d*, *d*, etc., deposits of white ochre, used by both the mythical woman and the *Ningauis* to decorate themselves for their ceremonies during *palaneri* times. 532x 778

At *e*, *e*, etc., are many milkwood trees, the sap of which, like the ochre deposits, was also utilized by both *Puruliangkala* and the *Ningauis* for body decorations. This sap is still used in the opening rituals of the *kulama* (p. 131). The dots are white fruits, *mandikama*, which *Puruliangkala* created for food. [824] [386]

The Sand-fly woman, Mandubuka, at Murninini

Mandubuka, the sand-fly woman, established the totemic place of Murninini, south-western Bathurst Island. 773 778

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

On the morning of the appointed day, the women went into the jungle, dug up a large number of both species of yams, brought them back to camp, and prepared them for cooking.

In the meantime, the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates had been sent to an appointed place in the jungle and told to wait until some of the *Mikingulas* visited them in the late afternoon. In the meantime other fully initiated men were painting the *Wadjeniati* initiates with a new body design (Pl. 42E).

In the late afternoon some members of the *kulama* party went to the place where the *Marukumuni* initiates were hiding, painted them black (Pl. 42E), and put new cockatoo feathers in their hair. While this was being done the male initiates pulled out their pubic hairs, and calling out "Booh-booh", threw them in all directions. When the decorations were complete, each initiate singed the hair from his legs but not his face, head or arms.[83] It is believed that this *Marukumuni* ritual assists in creating more thunderstorms and so prolonging the wet season.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the higher grades of the *kulama*, the *Mikingulas*, the *Mikiatarimas* and the *Mikintaras* with their female counterparts, went into the forest and, cutting the bark of the milk-wood tree (*Alstonia* sp.) used the white sap to paint their shoulders and faces, and to make a line down the centre of their abdomens. The men also put thick sap on their beards, which made them stand out stiffly around their faces.[84]

By the time the *Marukumuni* initiates had been decorated, brought back to camp and seated behind a low screen of boughs, the edible yams were cooked and ready for eating.

The leader, taking one of the *juruguni* and one of the *karawani* yams, bit a small portion from each, chewed it up and spat it in all directions. His actions were repeated by all the fully initiated people. The aborigines believe that the portions of chewed-up yam make the *mopaditis* so sick (they are always present to watch the *kulama* rituals), that they leave the locality. All the *kulama* people, with the exception of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* initiates then sat down to a meal of the edible yams.

The male initiates of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* grades were given their food by the female initiates of their grade in the same manner as a *pukamuni* man, i.e., the food was placed in their mouths, it must not touch any part of their body. If this taboo were broken, the *mopaditis* would make them ill.

[83] The female initiates do not carry out this ritual.

[84] Spencer, 1928, p. 660, Pl. 463, who refers to this phase in his description of the *kulama* illustrates the decorated men.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

881 led by the *Mikinatrinas*, carrying the baskets, followed by the *Mikinataras*, the *Mikiatarimas*, and the *Mikingulas*. No *kulama* woman accompanied this party.

As the *kulama* men entered the jungle they separated, each searching for vines which indicated the presence of the yam.[89] Before digging, however, the [824] [753] *kulama* men, softly calling "Oom-oom", gently patted the ground to wake up the yams, for, should any yam get a fright, its spirit, becoming annoyed, would make everyone ill with the *kulama* sickness. When digging the yams, the men were most careful not to break even one of the fine roots (Pl. 44D).

On filling in the holes, the men again made the thunder call, "Oom-oom", [821] which, they said, would cause more rain to fall before the day was over. One aboriginal accidentally broke a *kulama* yam while digging it. Instantly, he was on his feet, and, with the broken yam in his palm, dodged in and out among the trees, to escape the spirit of sickness released by the angry yam. After a few minutes, however, he returned, placed the broken yam carefully in the basket with the rest, and resumed his digging. His companions said that it was fortunate that he had only damaged the yam slightly, otherwise, its spirit would have made not only the careless aboriginal, but all of the *kulama* people ill.

When sufficient yams were collected, the party returned to camp in the same order as they went out, i.e., *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikinataras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*. The *Mikinatrinas* carried the yams to the foot of a blood-wood tree, called the *wuringaleta*, cleared the grass from around the base and, taking the yams from the basket, placed them on the ground. They were covered with leaves by the female initiates, the *Mikinatriningas*.

(4) *The Preparation of the Ceremonial Ground*

In the late afternoon, the *kulama* men and the male initiates, excluding the *Marukumuni* and the *Wadjeniatis*, prepared the ceremonial ground, the *milimika*.

372 The men walked toward an open space in the forest, and with low cries, 881 beat the ground with sticks, while the leader, pulling up a tuft of grass, threw it into the air. At the place where it fell, the men dug a small circle, the *tumarapi* (navel), in which the yams were to be cooked. Then, sitting down, the men pushed the sand and grass outwards with their feet until the *milimika*, about fifteen feet in diameter, was cleared and surrounded by a low mound of earth and grass.

[222] [137] [89] The *kulama* yam (*Dioscorea sativa*, variety *rotunda*) (Pl. 44D), is about the size of a hen's egg and covered with hairs similar to a beard. It is held in the palm of the hand until it is placed carefully in the bark basket.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

After a pause, another aboriginal entered the ring and sang about the previous singer's dead father.

(e) "My stomach gets hot like fire,[86] when I think of you, my uncle." Some of the women cried when the song was finished.

(7) *Cooking the Kulama Yam*

When the fire had burnt down to a bed of coals, the men picked up the fragments of burning wood, throwing them in all directions, scraped out the glowing embers with sticks, brushed the ashes from the heated termite mound with boughs, and the oven was ready for cooking the *kulama* yams. Meanwhile, one of the men had bound the rushes into a rope, *imbini*, about an inch in diameter, and sufficiently long to encircle the oven. The fragments of heated termite mound were lightly sprinkled with water, the *imbini* rope coiled around them, the yams carefully arranged on top and the whole covered first with thin sheets of newly split paper-bark, then with sand. Care was taken to cover the yams properly, otherwise, the aborigines explained, *saini*, the *kulama* sickness, would escape and cause blindness to the immediate participants.

As the oven was being covered, the leader patted the sand to consolidate it (Pl. 442), chanting at the same time, "Brr, Brr, Goodbye, Grandmother, goodbye",[86] in the same way as the owl-man, *Purujikini*, did at the first *kulama*.

While the yams were being cooked, the *kulama* people performed the following dances, to the rhythm of sticks beaten by the women.

(a) The dance of *jiriwa* (silver-crowned friar-bird).

(b) Two crocodiles, *jirakupai*, fighting (Pl. 302), followed by two aborigines as crocodiles crawling in the sand.

(c) A crocodile; the dancer carrying the goose-feather ball (*ankwianga*) in his mouth to symbolize the prey of the crocodile.

(d) The green turtle with the hands and arms of the dancer moving in imitation of the turtle's flippers.

Two young women, when asked to dance, performed:

(e) The crocodile, *jirakupai*,

(f) The buffalo,

(g) The shark (Pl. 300).

[86] The stomach, or solar-plexus, is the location of the *kumoka* (spirit), and the seat of the emotions.

[86] The *kulama* yam is looked upon as a female when it is dug up, placed beside the *merinyakwa* tree and immersed in the water for the first time. When taken from the swamp it is male, again becoming female from the time it is put in the oven until it is eaten.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532X 776 centipedes, *pierica*, and on the lower right at *e* is a bandicoot. These are the main foods of the *Papinjuwaris*. The outer oval is a line of rocks which surround the home of the *Papinjuwari*; *m*, *m*, are piles of boulders, and designs, *d*, *d*, etc., beach kapok trees, *tjingunia*. This *Papinjuwari* is shown with two eyes, although in the mythical story the *Papinjuwaris* have only one.

2. THE SPIRIT CHILDREN, THE PITIPITUIS

776 The *Pitipituis* are small dark-skinned people who have always existed, even in early creation times, although the aborigines cannot explain their origin. The adults are about nine and the children two to three inches high. They live either on outlying islands, in patches of dense jungle near the seashore, or in those of the freshwater swamps. The *Pitipitui* centres are scattered somewhat evenly around the two islands (Fig. 1); they are:

(1) Kaiadju, on the Baxendale reef, a few miles from Murupianga, S.E. Melville Island. In this locality, the *Pitipituis* have made their home among the trees of a mangrove swamp.

(2) Miadibiniadu, near Wailu, N.E. Melville Island, where the *Pitipituis* live among the dense groves of pandanus palms that grow on the edge of the freshwater lagoon. When the aborigines see the pandanus leaves scattered about, they believe that the *Pitipituis*, in their play, have been throwing them at one another. [824]

(3) Pumaduba, near Pirilou, on the Goose Creek swamps, N. Melville Island. In this locality the *Pitipituis* live among the blossoms and leaves of the water-lilies.

(4) Wulrungku (Karslake Island), N.W. Melville Island. Some *Pitipituis* camp in the jungles along the shore of Wulrungku, and others on the bed of the nearby ocean.

(5) Purapundili, a sandy island off Cape Van Diemen, N.W. Melville Island. During the heat of the day they shelter in the jungles of Cape Van Diemen.

(6) Tiatri-inga, a long beach at Murroo Point (south of Mandumbi), N.W. Bathurst Island. Like the *Pitipituis* at Wailu, those at Tiatri-inga live in the thick clumps of pandanus palms. At Mandumbi, near the mouth of Putawini Creek, a group of *Pitipituis* have made their home in a dense jungle.

(7) Jambutu and Juruna, at the head-waters of Port Hurd, S.W. Bathurst Island. Those at Jambutu live among the mangroves and those at Juruna, in the jungle.

(8) Jamputurui and Jurilupa, near Cape Fourcroy. The *Pitipituis* in the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Juwuku; while the sun-woman, the men of the Milky Way, the star women and the moon-man (except for a short period each month) travel daily across its surface. 772 776 821

Above the sky is another world, Tuniruna. This is the day-time home of numberless star women, the *Tapalinga*, and the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaimini*. During the dry season, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali*, with her family leave the sky-world, Juwuku, and make their homes in Tuniruna.

Unlike the Ilara, the lowest world, Tuniruna resembles the earth except that there is no sea, although there are many freshwater streams and swamps. All the creatures and plants that live on Melville Island, with the exception of the saltwater fish, are also at Tuniruna.

Every morning the inhabitants of the upper world leave their camps, the women to gather the plant foods of the forest, the men to hunt and capture the creatures, such as freshwater fish and the geese, ducks, pelicans and jabirus, that live in the extensive swamps. Also, many fruits grow at Tuniruna, some of which were specifically named, i.e., *rakarina*, the wild plum; *tauranina*, the white-fruited eugenia; *binamia*, the red-fruited eugenia; *putatakuna*, a small egg-shaped fruit about three-eighths of an inch long; *kworka*, cycad fruit, and the various yams.

By the time the sun-woman has sunk below the western horizon and extinguished her torch, the inhabitants of Tuniruna, the upper world, have returned from their foodgathering and are lighting their camp-fires to cook the food they have brought in. The light from these fires illuminates the upper world as brightly during the night-time as the sun-woman, with her blazing torch, illuminates the earth during the day-time.

About November, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali* leave Tuniruna and travel from place to place in the sky-world, shedding rain on the parched earth. During this time, the aborigines claim that those with good hearing can distinguish a low "Sh . . . sh . . .", the pleasure call of the thirsty trees as their roots drink the moisture from the sodden ground. It is then that the trees and plants of the upper world, using the raindrops as a vehicle, send their spirits (analogous to the human *Pitipinui*) (p. 146), to the ground beneath, where they grow into plants similar to their progenitors in the upper world.[69] That is, all the plants and trees in the land of the Tiwi were once, as tiny spirits, dropped from the upper world, Tuniruna. 776 821 [824]

[69] I did not specifically inquire whether the creatures in the upper world also sent down their spirits in the same manner as the plants. However, as both plants and human beings have a spirit origin, it is reasonable to assume that the creatures originate in a similar manner. Further research on this subject will be of considerable interest. [124]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

824 This belief probably accounts for the fact that I did not hear any songs chanted, or witness any ceremonies (with the possible exception of the *kulama*) that would bring about a plentiful supply of food. Nor did I hear [171] of any increase centres such as I saw on Groote Eylandt, (Mountford, 1956, pp. 84, 91), and were seen by Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 166), and myself (1948, p. 145) in Central Australia.

The Sky and the Upper World

532 821 772 Pl. 63D is a bark painting of the sky and the upper world, Tuniruna. The central series of concentric circles represent an unidentified planet, one of the wives of *Tjapara*, the moon-man; the designs, *d*, *d*, *d*, *d*, are some of the stars, *Tapalinga*; *f*, *f*, are the plum trees (already mentioned), which grow in the upper world. The radiating lines are the limbs of the plum trees.

The inner square, *b*, is the upper world, Tuniruna, the chevron patterns are the clouds in the sky, and the outer square the surface of the earth.

The groups of dots, throughout the painting, are the spirit fruits of the many trees at Tuniruna, which (as mentioned earlier), fall from the upper world to the earth beneath.

The Sun-woman, Wuriupranala

773 776 A myth, belonging to the early creation period, tells of how *Wuriupranala*, one of the first women, was given the task of keeping alight a torch of blazing bark. When, after the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, the men and women changed themselves into creatures and plants, *Wuriupranala* became the sun-woman, who travels daily across the sky, her torch of blazing bark providing the world with light and heat.

776 821 However, before *Wuriupranala* sets out from the eastern horizon, she powders her body with red ochre, the dust of which flying into the air, reddens the clouds of early morning.

When she reaches the western horizon, *Wuriupranala* again powders her body (this accounts for the brilliant sunsets), extinguishes her torch and rests for a while beside a celestial lagoon, Kumpinulu, before returning to the east along a path through the subterranean world, Ilara. On this journey, she is guided only by the light from the glowing end of her smouldering torch.[68]

532 773 776 821 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60A, B, Pl. 61A, B, and Pl. 63A, B, deal with the myth of the sun-woman.

The designs on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 61A, B, picture the sun, moon and stars.

[68] See pp. 35, 40 for more details of the sun-woman.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

demands it; but usually, when on a simple turtle or dugong hunting expedition, two persons only occupy places in the craft, one near the bow and another near the stern (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). The boatmen, while propelling the craft, squat with their buttocks resting upon the heels and with their knees pressed against the sides. The weight of their body being thus well within the boat, its stability is thereby considerably increased.

Paddles.—Propulsion is effected by means of paddles which are made of hard wood. They have a single well-shaped blade and a rounded handle (*vide* Plate XII, Fig. 2). The edges of the blade are parallel or taper slightly towards the end, which is square or rounded. Apart from the marks left by the tomahawk used in its making, the implement is without ornamentation. In one case only, a circular collar was carved around the handle, immediately above the sloping shoulder of the blade. The longest paddle noted measured 167 centimetres in length, its blade 80; the shortest was 115 centimetres in length and its blade 45. The width of the blades ranges from 7 to 9 centimetres. Both hands clasp the paddle, which is dipped alternately on one side or the other as the occasion and the steering require it.

Balers.—Water that accumulates in the canoe, either by leakage or overwash in a rough sea, is removed by means of a baler which is made out of the melon shell[1] (*Melo diadema*). The columella of the shell is carefully cut away, leaving only the large body-whorl, which is used as a scoop (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 3 and 4). The outer surface of the shell is painted with red and yellow ochre in large cross pattern, with a fine cross shading.

Dug-outs.—The dug-out canoes to which I have elsewhere referred[2] have, in all probability, been introduced by Malays from whom the natives obtain them by barter. Dr. Walter Roth has also proved that the dug-outs met with along the coast of Queensland are of Papuan origin. The form observed in Apsley Strait is without outrigger and hollowed out of a single tree trunk. The bow and stern are raised (*vide* Plate X, Fig. 2).

Corrobborees.

As with all primitive folk, song and dance constitute the ultimate stage of any social intercourse or festivity. The islanders are even more ready than their brothers on the mainland to resort to this means of entertainment. It thus happened that, wherever we came into contact with the blacks and presented them with divers small articles, a corrobboree was immediately inaugurated; even though the encounter happened to occur in the middle of the day. Corrobborees on the

[1] *Cf. Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* vol. ii, p. 17: "the baler (a melon shell) is in constant requisition."

[2] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 53. Among others, note that Major Campbell says of the Port Essington natives that "such of the canoes as I saw were hollowed from the trunks of trees, like those of the Malays and were probably either left by these people or stolen from them," *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 170.

11:Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CR20 Tiwi CR20

Tiwi invoke the power of a yam

By JANE C. GOODALE

IN 1912 SIR BALDWIN SPENCER, a professor of biology at the University of Melbourne, visited Melville Island, in the Timor Sea. There he observed a Tiwi tribal ceremony in which a number of young boys and girls participated in the ritual preparation of a species of yam the Tiwi called *Kulama*. Spencer wrote of this ceremony, "initiation of young men [and women] on Melville Island is intimately associated with what is known as a yam ceremony." This statement is particularly noteworthy, for, in 1954, when I visited the Tiwi for the first time and witnessed the annual *Kulama* ceremony, no initiates took part. The ceremony, however, was still being performed with no significant changes in the complex ritual procedures that Spencer had described more than forty years before.

That the *Kulama* ceremony can and does take place without initiates does not mean that Spencer was wrong to consider it an important part of initiation into adult life. It does mean that many of the new generation of Tiwi believe that such participation cannot prepare them adequately for a way of life that has been radically changed by contact with Western culture during the past fifty years.

In order to understand what this ceremony means to those who still perform it, one must first understand what the Tiwi consider to be adulthood. The Tiwi, now about a thousand in number, have lived for untold centuries on Melville and Bathurst Islands, which are situated thirty miles north of Darwin, the capital city of Australia's Northern Territory. The islands and surrounding waters are well supplied with food, and fresh water is plentiful. Economically and technically the Tiwi have been remarkably conservative. They came to the islands as hunters and gatherers of wild food, using crude chipped stone axes, digging sticks, simple wooden spears, and hunting dogs, and found that little else was needed to exploit the natural resources and to provide themselves with a stable, varied, and adequate diet. With the exception of the wallaby, the land animals of the two islands were small and nocturnal and could simply be collected during the day with little physical effort or skill. The few skills that were necessary were identifying tracks to find game and chopping out or digging up the sleeping animals. Young boys and girls were taught these techniques, since there was no essential sexual division of labor in food-collecting. Boys, however, re-

TIWI NATIVE on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day *Kulama* ceremony.

[P. 11, (B)]

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YOUNG GIRL AND BOY accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

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[181]

part of Tiwi speech. Poetic license in pronunciation and syllabification often occurs. The Tiwi have high regard for the linguistic ability needed to become a good Tiwi composer and singer, and instruction in the art of song composition and delivery is given to the initiates. Each initiate must perform in the *Kulama* before he can be considered a "graduate." According to my Tiwi informants, this requirement is the hardest of all, and it is also the reason for there being no set age for initiation. The old people are said to watch the young, and when the observers consider them mature enough, they swoop down upon their choices "like chicken hawks, without warning"—as the Tiwi say—and start the initiates along the path to adulthood.

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[171]

As far as I know, the *Kulama* ceremony has no parallel elsewhere in Australia. And there are many interesting questions that come to mind concerning the origin of the *Kulama* as it exists today. For instance, why is instruction in the preparation of a poisonous yam that is not part of the daily diet considered so important for initiation into adulthood? What is the origin of the idea that a yam has power over good and evil, and health and sickness? Why is such prominence accorded a yam in what is principally a hunting and gathering society?

[262]

[824]

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Any answers to these questions must be highly speculative, for the origin of the ceremony and its development lie in the unrecorded history of the Tiwi. However, I believe the following statements may well be valid.

[262]

Instruction in the natural resources of the land was considered vital to becoming an adult. Because the *Kulama* yam is poisonous and is not widely distributed, it was never part of the regular diet, but it could be used in economic emergencies if properly prepared. Instruction in its preparation was therefore extremely important as a potential survival measure. However, since the Tiwi live in a favorable environment, it is highly probable that such emergencies were very rare, so it was considered expedient to hold annual instruction periods. Because knowledge of

[See P. 15(A) for other part of caption and picture -- ANALYST]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CK20 Tiwi CK20

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HOT EARTH over baked *Kulama* yams is removed. Yams that are to be eaten at end of ritual must be resoaked in water.

[824]

SOME COOKED YAMS are cut, peeled, and mashed. Water and paint are then added. Yams are always handled with respect.

[951]
[858]

MEN RUB MASH on bodies to insure health, then do so to the uninitiated young, whose health is paternal responsibility.

[P. 16, (A)]